

Message Text

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ACTION AF-10

INFO OCT-02 EUR-12 IO-14 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05
H-02 INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 PA-02 PRS-01 SP-02
SS-15 NSCE-00 SSO-00 USIE-00 INRE-00 HA-05 /079 W
-----003434 251352Z /45

O R 251239Z JAN 78
FM AMEMBASSY CAPE TOWN
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 6635
USMISSION USUN NEW YORK IMMEDIATE
INFO AMEMBASSY BONN
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY OTTAWA
AMEMBASSY PARIS

UNCLAS CAPE TOWN 0105

E.O.11652:N/A
TAGS: PINT,WA
SUB: NAMIBIA: ARTICLE ALLEGES DIFFERENCES WITHIN THE
CONTACT GROUP

REF: CAPE TOWN 098

1. THERE FOLLOWS THE COMPLETE TEXT OF AN ARTICLE BY HENNIE
SERFONTEIN WHICH APPEARED IN THE CAPE TIMES AND RAND DAILY
MAIL THIS MORNING (JAN.25), SUGGESTING THAT SERIOUS FRICTION
EXISTS BETWEEN AMBASSADOR MCHENRY AND THE BRITISH AND FRENCH
MEMBERS OF THE CONTACT GROUP:

2. QUOTE: RIFT IN THE WEST OVER SWA TALKS.

THE PUBLIC DEFENCE BY MR. CYRUS VANCE, THE US SECRETARY OF
STATE, OF MR. DON MCHENRY, HIS COUNTRY'S CHIEF NEGOTIATOR
IN THE SOUTH WEST AFRICA TALKS, HAS FOCUSED ATTENTION ON
SERIOUS DIFFERENCES BETWEEN THE USA AND ITS WESTERN ALLIES.

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IN AN UNUSUAL STEP YESTERDAY THE STATE DEPARTMENT
STATED THE MR.VANCE HAD "EMPHATICALLY" DENIED THAT
MR MCHENRY WAS BEING SHUNTED ASIDE AS THE US
NEGOTIATOR.

ACCORDING TO PRESS REPORTS, "SENIOR STATE
DEPARTMENT OFFICIALS" SUGGESTED THAT MR VANCE KNEW

THE SOURCES OF THE REPORTS AND REGARDED THEM "IN A MOST SERIOUS LIGHT."

THE STATE DEPARTMENT SOURCES ACCUSED SOUTH AFRICA OF AN ANTI-MCHENRY CAMPAIGN, SUGGESTED THAT SOUTH AFRICA WAS BEHIND THE LATEST ATTEMPT TO HAVE TALKS AT FOREIGN MINISTERIAL LEVEL TO KEEP MR MCHENRY OUT OF THE PICTURE, AND HINTED THAT SOUTH AFRICA WAS RESPONSIBLE FOR ONE-SIDED LEAKS TO THE PRESS.

HOWEVER, THESE ACCUSATIONS ARE SIMPLY NOT TRUE. THE EFFORTS TO OUT-MANOEUVRE MR MCHENRY AT FOREIGN MINISTERIAL LEVEL AMANATED DIRECTLY FROM BRITAIN, WITH THE FULL SUPPORT OF FRANCE.

LAST WEEK NEGOTIATIONS BETWEEN SOUTH AFRICA AND BRITAIN TOOK PLACE AT THE HIGHEST LEVEL AND STRATEGY WAS DISCUSSED. IN SOUTH AFRICAN POLITICAL AND DIPLOMATIC CIRCLES IT IS NO SECRET THAT BRITISH AND FRENCH DELEGATES HAVE MADE SCATHING REMARKS ABOUT US STRATEGY AND THE MANNER IN WHICH MR MCHENRY HAS CONDUCTED THE NEGOTIATIONS. THEY CLEARLY SHARE MR BOTH'S MISGIVINGS ABOUT US STRATEGY.

BRITAIN AND FRANCE BELIEVE THAT THE CAUSE OF THE NEAR COLLAPSE OF THE TALKS TWO WEEKS AGO WAS GROWING "HOSTILITY" BETWEEN THE SOUTH AFRICAN AND US
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GOVERNMENTS AND THE "CONTINUING INTRANSIGENCE" OF SWAPO.

THE MAIN PURPOSE OF ANGLO-FRENCH STRATEGY WAS TO AVOID THE FRICTION AND TO BYPASS THE US UNITED NATIONS OFFICE UNDER THE COMMAND OF MR ANDREW YOUNG AND HIS ASSISTANT, MR. MCHENRY.

SOME WESTERN DIPLOMATS OPENLY BLAME MR.MCHENRY FOR HIS GROWING HOSTILITY TOWARDS SOUTH AFRICA, WHICH THEY CLAIM WAS FIRED BY THE BIKO AFFAIR.

THEY ALSO REFER TO THE "GENERAL ATMOSPHERE UNDER WHICH HE AND MR YOUNG WORK AT THE UNITED NATIONS."

BRITISH AND FRENCH DELEGATES HAVE CONSIDERABLE SYMPATHY FOR WHAT THEY DESCRIBE AS SOUTH AFRICA'S "AMENABLE ATTITUDE" AND ITS "MEANINGFUL AND SUBSTANTIAL CONCESSIONS."

THEY ALSO BLAME THE USA FOR CLUMSY NEGOTIATIONS THAT CULMINATED IN THE LAST-MINUTE CANCELLATION OF THE SCHEDULED JANUARY 17 AND 23 MEETINGS.

THE QUESTION NOW ARISES: IS THE STATE DEPARTMENT'S
ATTACK ON MR. BOTHA A DISGUISED SWIPE AT ITS ANGLO-FRENCH
ALLIES? OR IS THE USA REALLY NOT AWARE OF THE SENTIMENTS
OF ITS PARTNERS OR THAT SOUTH AFRICA HAS SUCCEEDED IN
DRIVING A WEDGE BETWEEN THE WESTERN NEGOTIATORS?
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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 jan 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: NEWS LEAKS, AMBASSADORS MEETINGS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 25 jan 1978
Decaption Date: 01 jan 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: n/a
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment:
Disposition Date: 01 jan 1960
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1978CAPET00105
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D780037-0305
Format: TEL
From: CAPE TOWN
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1978/newtext/t19780126/aaaaavil.tel
Line Count: 124
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: 4bd3a1e0-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ACTION AF
Original Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: n/a
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 78 CAPE TOWN 98
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 10 feb 2005
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 3718991
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: NAMIBIA: ARTICLE ALLEGES DIFFERENCES WITHIN THE CONTACT GROUP
TAGS: PINT, WA
To: STATE USUN NEW YORK
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odb://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/4bd3a1e0-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Sheryl P. Walter
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
20 Mar 2014
Markings: Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014